

WASHINGTON, DC -- The House Judiciary Committee today unanimously passed Congresswoman Linda Sánchez's (D-Lakewood) bill, the Professional Athlete Immigration Act (H.R. 5060). The bill allows professional athletes to extend their work visas, ensuring they can remain with their professional teams, and continue contributions to their surrounding communities.

The bill changes existing law by allowing foreign-born professional athletes to petition for visa extensions every five years. The bill would ensure that foreign athletes in their prime are allowed to continue performing for U.S. teams. Approval of the visa extensions would still be determined by the Department of Homeland Security.

"While they are here, these athletes serve as role models, and cultural ambassadors in our communities, but there is no reason to force them to become permanent residents if they plan to leave at the end of their careers," Congresswoman Linda Sánchez said. "This bill ensures they have the ability to stay as long as they remain contributors to their respective teams and local communities."

The bill has been endorsed by Major and Minor League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League, and the relevant players associations.